

# Pesticide

# info

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT PESTICIDES

## Pull welcome mat in, keep pesky guests out



### California Department of Pesticide Regulation

1001 I Street  
P.O. Box 4015  
Sacramento, CA 95812-4015  
916-445-4300  
www.cdpr.ca.gov

#### BRANCHES

**Enforcement**  
916-324-4100

**Northern Regional Office**  
916-376-8960

**Central Regional Office**  
559-297-3511

**Southern Regional Office**  
714-279-7690

**Environmental Monitoring**  
916-324-4039

**Fiscal Operations**  
916-324-1350

**Human Health Assessment**  
916-445-4233

**Information Technology**  
916-445-2992

**Personnel**  
916-322-4553

**Pest Management and Licensing**  
916-445-3914

**Licensing and Certification Office**  
916-445-4038

**Pesticide Registration**  
916-445-4400

**Worker Health and Safety**  
916-445-4222

The best way to control home and garden pests is to avoid them in the first place. Be inhospitable to these unwanted guests. Pests, like people, need air, water, food and shelter to survive. Take these away and pests will find your home and garden less attractive. They will have to go somewhere else to survive.

### PREVENTING PESTS INDOORS

#### Water, water, but not everywhere

Pests hang around in nooks and crannies of your home, especially damp areas. Provide ventilation. Fix leaky plumbing. Get rid of standing water under your houseplants or refrigerator, or in buckets. Dry wet rags and other damp materials, or toss out.

#### Neatness counts

Keep your home clean. Make it harder for pests to get food. Store foods like cereal, pasta, flour, raisins and crackers in tightly sealed containers. Keep

your kitchen clean of crumbs and free from cooking grease. Don't leave food in pet bowls for long periods. Empty your garbage can often and put food scraps in tightly covered trash bins.

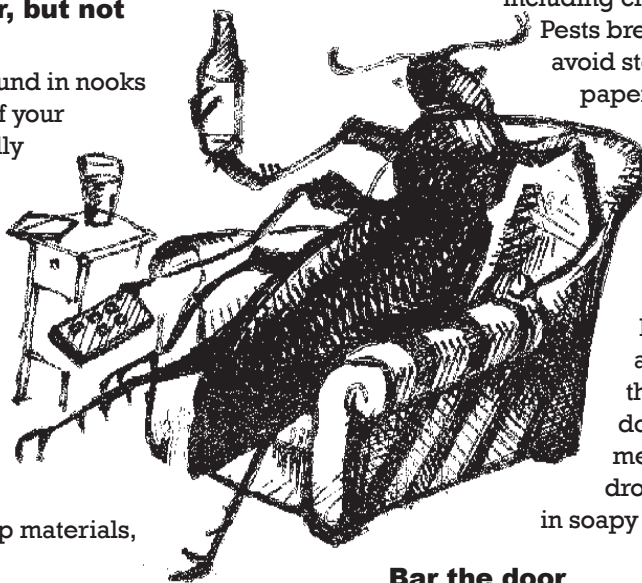
#### Get them where they hide

Block off or get rid of pest hiding places. Seal cracks and crevices with caulk so pests can't get in. Regularly vacuum places where food may have been dropped, including chairs and sofas.

Pests breed in clutter so avoid storing newspapers, paper bags, and boxes.

Also, before bringing packages into your home, check for pests.

To control fleas, bathe pets often and wash surfaces they lie on. Comb dogs and cats with a metal flea comb and drown captured fleas in soapy water.



#### Bar the door

Keep out crawling and flying pests by installing screens on windows and doors. Block passageways through the floor and caulk and seal openings in walls and in the backs and floors of cabinets. Put weather-stripping on doors and windows.

Don't leave doors to the outside open, and attached a door sweep to prevent pest entry. Routinely clean floor drains with soap and hot water. To keep out rodents, close openings in outside walls and foundations that are larger than a quarter-inch.

## PREVENTING PESTS OUTSIDE

### Get them where they hide outside, too

Woodpiles around your home attract termites, carpenter ants and rats. Store wood off the ground and away from the house. Trim vegetation that touches the house. Pests hide in undisturbed areas – under rocks and stepping-stones, for example. Diseased plants, tree prunings, and fallen fruit and leaves harbor pests. Pests can't set up housekeeping if you get rid of the materials that shelter them.

### Remove breeding sites

Pet droppings attract flies that can spread bacteria. Clean up and bury droppings at least every few days. Don't let litter or garbage pile up. It draws mice, rats and other rodents. Drain off standing puddles of water where mosquitoes and other pests can breed. Make sure drainpipes and other water sources drain away from your house.

## PREVENTING PESTS IN YOUR GARDEN

### A healthy plant resists pests

Keep lawns, trees and shrubs healthy with proper watering and pruning, and by using the right fertilizer. Begin with good landscape design, selecting plants suited for your area and soil. Install well-designed irrigation to conserve water and avoid standing water. Select seeds and seedlings known to resist pests and disease and suited to the climate and soil where you live. Plant at the right time of the year. Plants with similar water or sunlight needs should be planted in the same area. For example, don't place drought-tolerant plants in or next to a lawn.

Native flowers, shrubs and trees are often good choices because they are well-adapted to local conditions and usually require minimal care. Plant natives based on their natural growing habits.

## Many pests prefer specific kinds of plants

Don't provide pests a continued source of food. Don't put annual plants (including vegetables) that are similar to one another in the same area year after year. For example, rotate potatoes, tomatoes, and peppers with other kinds of plants. Mix vegetables and herbs by planting in alternating rows or small blocks. Talk to your nursery about crop rotation. Some pests don't show up until late in the growing season, so plant susceptible crops early.

## Pest problems? Practice IPM

IPM, or integrated pest management, means selecting the pest control method least disruptive to the environment. It includes integrating proper planning, natural pest controls ("good bugs"), cultural and mechanical controls, and chemicals, if necessary.

Your first step—look for pests. Didn't find any? Then do nothing. If you do see pests or their evidence (for example, droppings or plant damage), you will need to identify the pest to know how to manage it. Ask your nursery or county University of California Cooperative Extension office.

Try mechanical or cultural controls first. For example, pull weeds, mulch around plants, wash insects off with a hose. If you decide to use a pesticide, do your homework before buying. Read the label. Is your target pest on it? Have you chosen a safer product, such as a bait station, insect growth regulator, or low-toxicity chemical pesticide?

Read the label before using any pesticide product, and apply according to directions. Don't over-treat—it's potentially harmful to you, your family and pets, and can contaminate your community's water. Don't assume more is better. It's not.

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Single copies of this handout are available by calling your County Agricultural Commissioner's office, from DPR at 916-445-3974, or can be downloaded from DPR's Web site, [www.cdpr.ca.gov](http://www.cdpr.ca.gov), "Consumer Fact Sheets."

**Pesticide Complaint?**

**1-87PestLine**  
INFORMATION LINE

**1-877-378-5463**

